



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

July 20, 2006

For immediate release

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- 3. Public input needed on plans to improve two Iowa lakes**

LEARN ABOUT THE LAND – A GEOLOGIC GUIDE TO THE RAGBRAI CHALLENGE

IOWA CITY – For those about to embark on the muscle-straining, knee-breaking challenge known as RAGBRAI, help is available.

Cyclists who join the Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa (RAGBRAI) can find their guide to the challenging terrain in a series of brochures created by the DNR's Geological Survey and the U.S. Geological Survey.

Each brochure provides a shaded relief map of the day's ride. The brochures highlight the route and the elevations that cyclists will traverse. RAGBRAI riders can also find points of interest and information about the geologic features they will find each day.

"Geology is the interpretation of ancient history, components and structure of the land," said Chad Fields, a DNR geologist.

The brochures can help cyclists understand the geologic factors that created the landscape they cross. For day one, that includes a 2,800-foot climb across the Missouri River Valley and up and down the Loess Hills.

Anyone who wants to know more about the landscape features is invited to a "Learn About the Land" discussion at 4:30 p.m. on July 28 in Iowa City. The talk will be in front of Trowbridge Hall, just north of the Old Capital, on the University of Iowa campus. Ray Anderson, a senior researcher with the DNR Geological Survey, and Jim Caldwell, a

hydrologist with the U.S. Geological Survey, will discuss the hydrologic and geologic points of interest and answer questions about the route.

“Learn about the Land” brochures will be distributed at the campgrounds by the U.S.G.S. on Saturday and Sunday nights. They will also be available at the Iowa Conservation Team booth during subsequent days of the ride.

The brochures are available online at the DNR Web site at:

www.iowadnr.gov/news/06jul/ragbrai.html

- [Day 1: July 23, 2006 - Sergeant Bluff to Ida Grove](#)
- [Day 2: July 24, 2006 - Ida Grove to Audubon](#)
- [Day 3: July 25, 2006 - Audubon to Waukee](#)
- [Day 4: July 26, 2006 - Waukee to Newton](#)
- [Day 5: July 27, 2006 - Newton to Marengo](#)
- [Day 6: July 28, 2006 - Marengo to Coralville](#)
- [Day 7: July 29, 2006 - Coralville to Muscatine](#)

If planning ahead, cyclists may want to use the DNR’s [Mapping](#) Web site (GIS Interactive) to preview the route. The “Recreation Map” includes interesting Iowa outdoor stops, with a “Service” folder of businesses such as repair shops or restaurants that might be useful. To use the maps, visit www.iowadnr.gov and click on “Mapping (GIS Interactive).”

For more information, contact Chad Fields with the DNR at (319) 335-2083; or Kaylene Carney with USGS at (319) 358-3612, or (319) 430-5907 during RAGBRAI on Saturday to Monday.

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PUBLIC ASKED FOR IDEAS TO IMPROVE THREE NORTHEAST IOWA RIVERS

Public comment period extended on water quality improvement plans

DES MOINES – The DNR will hold four public meetings to gather Iowans’ input on draft plans to clean up the Maquoketa River, Volga River and Black Hawk Creek.

The DNR will hold meetings in the following areas:

Maquoketa River

- Maquoketa: Aug. 2, 2 p.m., Hurstville Interpretive Center, 18670 63rd Street
- Dundee: Aug. 2, 6:30 p.m., stone lodge at Backbone State Park, 1347 129th St.

Volga River

- Fayette: Aug. 3, 6:30 p.m., Wildwood Nature Center, four miles north of Fayette on Highway 150

Black Hawk Creek

- Hudson: Aug. 3, 1:30 p.m., Hudson Community Center at City Hall, 525 Jefferson St.

High bacteria levels are the main cause of water quality problems in these northeast Iowa rivers. The bacteria indicate that waste from wildlife, livestock, birds and humans is in the water. The bacteria come from sources throughout the watershed, or the area of land that drains into the rivers. Those sources include treated wastewater, rain and snow runoff from areas with wildlife and livestock, and leaking septic systems.

The DNR has developed draft water quality improvement plans, also known as TMDLs, or Total Maximum Daily Loads, for each river. TMDLs are calculations used to determine how much of a pollutant a water body can receive and still meet water quality standards. The water quality improvement plan includes information on how conservation efforts in the watershed can improve water quality.

Iowans can also submit comments on the Maquoketa, Volga, and Black Hawk Creek plans via e-mail, phone or mail (contact information below). Public comments will be accepted until Aug. 25.

Copies of the draft plan are available from the following sources, which can also be used to submit comments:

Internet: www.iowadnr.gov/water/watershed/tmdl/publicnotice.html

E-mail: chris.vangorp@dnr.state.ia.us

Telephone: Chris Van Gorp at (515) 281-4791

Mail: Chris Van Gorp, care of Iowa DNR, Wallace State Office Building, 502 E. 9th St., Des Moines, Iowa 50319

After receiving public comments, the DNR will forward the draft plan to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for final approval.

For more information, contact Chris Van Gorp at (515) 281-4791.

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PUBLIC INPUT NEEDED ON PLANS TO IMPROVE TWO IOWA LAKES

DES MOINES – The DNR is seeking the public's help to improve water quality at Five Island Lake in Palo Alto County and Lake Cornelia in Wright County.

The DNR will hold two public meetings July 26:

- Five Island Lake: 1:30 p.m., Iowa Lakes Community College (Emmetsburg Campus) Auditorium, 3200 College Drive, Emmetsburg
- Lake Cornelia: 6:30 p.m., enclosed shelter at Lake Cornelia, 1768 O'Brien Ave., near Clarion

The DNR will present draft water quality improvement plans at the meetings. These plans discuss the problems with the lakes and will include suggestions for local communities on how to work for cleaner water.

The draft plan is also known as a TMDL, or Total Maximum Daily Load. TMDLs are calculations used to determine how much of a pollutant a water body can receive and still maintain water quality standards.

The DNR is particularly interested in Iowans' ideas for improving water quality in these lakes. From these meetings, the DNR will create an implementation plan, which gives local communities ideas on how to improve the lakes and is included with the final improvement plan. After receiving public comments, the DNR will send the improvement plan to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for final approval.

The water quality problems at both lakes come from high levels of algae and turbidity, or cloudy water. The high algae levels develop from increased levels of nutrients in the lake, especially phosphorous. The poor water clarity is a result of the algae blooms and also from sediment suspended in the water. The sediment comes from two sources: the land area that drains to the lakes and resuspension from within the lakes. High levels of algae and turbidity make the lake less visually appealing and less desirable for uses like swimming, but do not pose a specific human health threat.

The DNR will accept comments on the draft plan through August 18. Copies of the draft plan are available from the following sources, which can also be used to submit comments:

- Internet: www.iowadnr.gov/water/watershed/tmdl/publicnotice.html
- E-mail chris.vangorp@dnr.state.ia.us
- Telephone: Chris Van Gorp at (515) 281-4791
- Mail: Chris Van Gorp, care of Iowa DNR, Wallace State Office Building, 502 E. 9th St., Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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